REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1, 3-5, 7-8, 10-12, and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hiraishi et al. (US, 6, 538,759), claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Fu et al. (US 2002/0009229), and claims 2 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiraishi et al. and further in view of Bloomquist et al. (US 6,594,034).

Claims 6 and 13 have been indicated to contain allowable subject matter.

The specification is objected to for allegedly having a Title of the Invention that is not descriptive.

Summary of Response to the Office Action

Applicants have amended the Title of the Invention, and amended independent claims 1, 2, 6-9, 13, and 15 to further define the invention and has added new claims 16-23. Accordingly, claims 1-23 are presently pending.

Objection to the Specification

The specification is objected to for allegedly having a Title of the Invention that is not descriptive. Accordingly, Applicants have amended the Title to recite "RECOGNIZING A PRINT INHIBIT IMAGE PATTERN USING IMAGE DATA CONVERTED FOR FAST RECOGNITION." Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that the Title, as presently amended, is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed, and respectfully request that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Rejection of independent claims 1 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

In the Office Action, claims 1, 3-5, 7-8, 10-12, and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hiraishi et al. (US, 6, 538,759), and claims 2 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hiraishi et al. and further in view of Bloomquist et al. (US 6,594,034). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections as being based upon prior art references, either taken singly or combined, that neither teach nor suggest the features of independent claims 1 and 8, hence dependent claims 2-7 and 9-14.

According to the Office Action, Hiraishi et al. allegedly discloses an output image data generation unit which generates output image data from the input image data (col. 13, 3rd paragraph, col. 13, line 58 to col. 14, line 6, col. 5, line 37 to col. 6, line 3, "image processing section 11" in FIGs. 1, 7, 11, 12 , and 17), a recognition unit which recognizes the specific image (col. 6, 3rd paragraph, "comparison/determination section 18" in FIGs. 1, 3, 7, 11, 12, and 17), and a converting unit for converting the input image data into recognition image data in a format which can be recognized by the recognition unit (col. 4, line 60 to col. 5, line 5, col. 8, first four full paragraphs, "image process section 16a" in FIG. 3). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Independent claim 1, as amended, recites an image processing device including, in part, "a converting unit that performs a converting process to convert the input image data into recognition image data; and a recognition unit that performs a recognition process to recognize a specific image from the converted recognition image data, wherein the output image data generation unit is adapted to wait until the recognition unit completes the recognition process for performing an image process subsequent to the generation process." Similarly, independent claim 8, as amended, recites an image processing method including, in part, "generating output

image data from the input image data, and waiting to perform a image process subsequent to the generating until a process of recognizing has completed; converting the input image data into recognition image data; and recognizing a specific image by using the converted recognition image data." Applicants respectfully submit that at least these features recited by amended independent claims 1 and 8, and dependent claims 2-7 and 9-14 are neither taught nor suggested by Hiraishi et al. and Bloomquist et al., whether taken singly or combined.

In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, Hiraishi et al. teaches, col. 6 line 63 to col. 7, line 9, an image processing method for detecting the non-reproducible image that utilizes the "image processing section 11" (i.e., output image data generation unit 14) which is not adapted to wait for the signal from "recognition section 15" (i.e. recognition unit 18) before sending the resultant image information to the engine section (i.e. image formation device). In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that as depicted in FIGs. 1, 7, 11, 12, and 17, Hiraishi et al. discloses the two independent signal paths from "recognition section 15" and "comparison/determination section 18" to "image processing section 11." However, as described in Applicants' Specification at page 8, lines 17-27, and page 14, line 7 to page 16, line 4, and shown in FIGs. 1, 2, 6, and 7, the current invention by analogy essentially combines the features of "recognition section 15" and "comparison/determination section 18" of the prior art to produce a recognition result (i.e. detection signal), thereby overcoming the need for unnecessary signal path from two image processing sections.

As pointed out in MPEP §2131, '[t]o anticipate a claim, the reference must teach every element of the claim." Thus, "[a] claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 2 USPQ 2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that since Hiraishi et al. fails to teach or suggest every element of at least independent claims 1 and 8, then Hiraishi et al. fails to anticipate at least independent claims 1 and 8, and hence dependent claims 2-7 and 9-14. Furthermore, Applicants assert that the Office Action does not rely on Bloomquist et al. to remedy the deficiencies of Hiraishi et al. Moreover, Applicants respectfully assert that Bloomquist et al. cannot remedy the deficiencies of Hiraishi et al.

For at least the above reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that rejection of claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) and 103(a) should be withdrawn because the above-discussed novel combinations of features are neither taught nor suggested by any of the applies references, whether taken alone or in combination.

Rejection of independent claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claim 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Fu et al. (US 2002/0009229). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 15, and respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections, and the timely allowance of all pending claims.

According to the Office Action, Fu et al. allegedly discloses generating output image data from the input image data (paragraph 41-42). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Independent claim 15, as amended, recites a storage medium readable by a computer, storing a program of instructions including, in part, "generating output image data from the input image data, and waiting to perform an image process subsequent to the generating until a process of recognizing has completed; converting the input image data into recognition image data; and recognizing the specific image by using the converted recognition image data." Applicants respectfully submit that at least these features of amended independent claim 15 are neither taught nor suggested by Fu et al.

In contrast to the Applicants' claimed invention, Fu et al. teaches, at paragraph 41 and 42, the digital data received from the scanner is rescaled first, thereafter, the rescaled data is transmitted to a pattern detector in order to determine whether the specific targeted pattern is present in the scanned document (i.e. input image data), and outputs the rescaled data to be printed or copied when none of the targeted pattern is detected. However, as taught in page 11, lines 7-18 of the Specification, and FIGs. 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7, the present invention creates two independent image data (i.e., PDL and raster image) and processes (i.e., output image data generation, recognizing process) for obtaining the output image data. Fu et al., on the other hand, discloses only the single image data (rescaled data) to be processed in the pattern detector and to be outputted to a image formation device. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 15 is neither taught nor suggested by Fu et al. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent claim 15, as amended, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be withdrawn.

New Claims 16-23

Applicants have added new claims 16-23. Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 16-23 further define the current invention. Thus, Applicants respectfully request consideration and allowance of newly added claims 16-23.
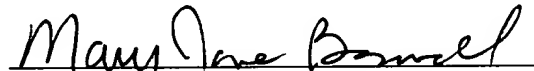
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, withdrawal of all rejections, and the timely allowance of all pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.R.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP

By: _Mary Jane Boswell_
Mary Jane Boswell
Reg. No. 33,652

Dated: July 28, 2004

Customer No. 09629
MORGAN, LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP
1111 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004
Telephone: (202) 739-3000
Facsimile: (202) 739-3001

1-WA/2194438.1